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**EGYPT FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO.**  
THE Archaeological Survey of Egypt undertaken by the Egyptian Exploration Fund is proceeding under favourable auspices, and the results of each year's discoveries seem of increasing interest. Last year, several artists were sent out to make fac-simile drawings of the wall-paintings in tombs belonging to the eleventh and twelfth dynasties—that is, of a period about two to three thousand years B.C., or approximately five thousand years ago. These drawings, supplemented by portions of the original wall of a tomb which had been shattered by an earthquake, rendering the removal possible without any destruction on the part of the explorers, have recently been exhibited at the residence of the Marquis of Bute, and present many special points of interest. The freshness and beauty of the pigments employed in these very ancient frescoes are most remarkable. We are accustomed to look with wonder at the works of what we call the 'old masters,' and to think the colouring of Orcagna, Cimabue, and Giotto marvellous after the lapse of five or six centuries; but here we get colours which have stood the test of ten times that period, and yet retain their freshness and beauty almost unimpaired, so that you may trace the delicate gradations in the plumage of a bird, and thus classify numerous varieties of ducks, evidently domesticated and carefully bred; and even in the hieroglyphics the birds are so carefully portrayed that the species designed is easily recognisable. Three species of domesticated dogs appear with characteristics resembling those of to-day. There is a great lean-bodied, long-legged creature which might be the ancestor of our greyhound; but the legs are much thicker, and it is altogether more clumsy and less graceful. Then there is a dog possessing the characteristics of the boarhound, but with a mottled coat somewhat resembling that of a tortoiseshell cat. This colouring is also observable in the third species of dog, which has a strong affinity with the modern spitz or 'dachshund,' having a long body

and short bandy legs; but the latter characteristic is not so decidedly marked as at the present day. This little dog would seem to have been a favourite with the Egyptians at that remote period, for two of the kind are depicted, a male and female, one accompanying a lady in a close palanquin. It may here be remarked that a dog very closely resembling the one here portrayed is still found in South Africa, where it is bred and highly esteemed by the Hottentots, who even make the women nurse the puppies with their own children. This dog, known as a 'brach-hond,' is long-bodied and short-legged, but not so bandy-legged as the dachshund; the colouring also is more like that of the ancient Egyptian dog, being mottled, and often spotted with red like a cow.

There is also a cat, large and gaunt and fierce, certainly not our domestic tabby, but something approaching to the wild-cat. Whether this was the variety dedicated to Pasht, and of which so many mummies are found, can hardly be determined by the painting; but probably it was intended to represent that sacred animal.

The types of mankind shown on these very early paintings are of peculiar interest. There is the swarthy Egyptian ploughman, holding the primitive wooden plough, not, however, of the earliest type, which was only a crooked pointed stick driven by hand, whereas this is drawn by an ox, and has a cross-handle, painted red. Then there are the bearers of the palanquin, two of whom appear to be shaven, as was the manner of the Egyptians; whilst a third wears a full crop of hair or a wig, probably to denote superior rank. In another painting, rank is shown by the leopard-skin robe, worn apparently by an overseer, who is directing two workmen; and it may be remarked that even to the present day the leopard skin denotes the priestly caste, medicine-man, or chieftainship, in all parts of Africa.

Perhaps the most interesting of the human figures depicted is a group, or rather procession, of red-haired, light-skinned, blue-eyed people, supposed to be Libyans, the men bearing in their

hands crooked clubs resembling boomerangs, and having other weapons, notably a huge knife, thrust through their shaggy red hair; whilst the women carry their children in baskets on their backs; and two are depicted bearing monkeys instead of children. Conventionally, the Egyptian women are always represented as much lighter in colour than the men, and two groups in these paintings are especially remarkable. In one, two women are represented standing facing each other, one foot raised, touching that of the adversary, one hand being also placed on that of the other, whilst a round object, supposed to be a bladder, is attached by a long string to the hair of each at the back, hanging down to the shoulders. This is evidently a game, in which the performers whirl round and strike each other with the ball or bladder attached to the hair; and it is easy to see that, if the ball were not very light, the game might be an exceedingly rough one. In the other group, two women tossing balls are seated on the backs of two other women, the supposition being that when they fail to catch, they in turn become horses for the others. These two games of ball strike one as new, and especially noteworthy from the performers being women. The great peculiarity in all these human figures is the extraordinary length of the fingers and toes. In those days, it was evidently a mark of beauty to have a long foot and hand, and the artists must have complimented their subjects by exaggeration in these points.

Here, too, we may see the mode of making fire in the twenty-fifth century B.C., for we see a man represented using a fire-drill such as is still in use among some uncivilised races, which consists of a thong or bowstring twisted round a pointed stick, inserted in a very dry board, the thong being pulled rapidly backwards and forwards until fire is produced by friction. This is of course an advance upon the earlier practice of rubbing two sticks together, which is the custom among very primitive savages, and upon the drill twirled in the hand, which is also still in use.

The figures and hieroglyphs of these tombs, which are situated in the rocky ground on the east bank of the Nile, in the provinces of Minieh and Assiut, in Upper Egypt, differ from the generality of Egyptian hieroglyphs, which are usually incised in the granite, whereas, in these the figures having been first traced on the stone, the interspaces were then chipped away, leaving the design in relief, these raised figures being afterwards very carefully and beautifully painted. The Arabs have taken advantage of this raised-work, and have diligently chipped away the figures from all the fragments which have fallen into their hands, either out of pure love of destruction, or more probably in order to sell the painted hieroglyphs thus detached as amulets. This shows the necessity for completing the Survey as soon as possible, in order to preserve these precious relics of hoar antiquity from the hands of the modern spoiler, for the value of these paintings and hieroglyphs in illustrating the history of the world cannot be over-estimated. In them we see life as it existed in the most civilised country of the world three thousand years and more before the birth of Christ; the manners and customs, dress, and even the amuse-

ments of this remote time are here revealed to us. We can trace their commerce with distant lands, their modes of navigation and agriculture, their method of trapping birds, as well as the game they hunted and the water-fowl they domesticated, all so faithfully delineated as to be unimpeachable witnesses of the truth of ancient historical records; whilst the inscriptions enlighten us as to the names and exploits of their rulers, probably with some exaggerations and embellishments, yet on the whole trustworthy as to matters of fact, and incidentally throwing light upon much that is obscure in the writings of ancient historians, both biblical and secular.

### POMONA.\*

#### CHAPTER XXII.

Night brings us stars, as sorrow shows us truths;  
Though many, yet they help not; bright, they light not;  
They are too late to serve us; and sad things  
Are eye too true. We never see the stars  
Till we can see nought but them. So with truth.

BAILEY.

'SAGE.'

No answer.

'Sage!' again, louder.

Still no answer.

'Sage, are you asleep?' with some irritation, for though that week at Scar had done wonders for Kitty, and she was beginning in many respects to shake off invalid ways, she had been so used for the last three months to have immediate attention paid to her slightest word, that this extraordinary silence on Sage's part was not to be endured patiently.

Owen Ludlow was occupied that August with a larger and more careful study of Scar Head than he had ever attempted before, from his favourite point of view for observing the sunset effects, from the rocks a little way along the shore beyond Scar. And here, day after day, his easel was set; and hard by, in a nook among the rocks, a comfortable resting-place for Kitty was contrived where a high rock cast a shade even at mid-day; and cushions and rugs accommodated themselves to an easily tired back; while, if she stretched out a hand, already a little bit less white and limp than when she came, she could lay it on cool brown seaweed, over which the sea washed at high-tide, and could pop the little knobs when she had sufficient energy.

Owen Ludlow was not at hand when Kitty spoke, though his easel and canvas still stood there. He had gone back to see if there were any letters by the second post, and had found a perplexing one for himself, which, however, had not prevented him from bringing down one for Sage directed in Maurice's hand, a letter which he knew had been anxiously expected all the week. He came and dropped it over her shoulder into her lap as she sat on the rocks, and then he walked on along the shore towards the point, pondering his own letter, with only one glance round at her radiant face as she held her lover's letter, examining the direction and postmark with a sort of childish pleasure in prolonging the infinite delight of opening it.

Kitty's voice sounded to Sage as if it were a long way off; but the last words seemed to take

hold of her senses, which were a little numb and confused, with a sudden shock. Both be drowned? Well, that would be an end of a lot of trouble. It really would be difficult to get Kitty up that steep bit of beach all by herself; and the tide had a way of creeping in and turning those large stones into islands, and deepening and spreading, and then rising and covering one point after another, till there was nothing but smooth water, with the quiet moonlight over it. It would be a very easy way out of life's perplexities, and she would not be leaving Kitty. She had promised mother to care for little Kit, and she would not like to leave her so weak and ill. But if they were both drowned, they would be together, and mother would not need to say, 'Where's Kitty?' when they met.

She did not really mean it, of course. If such an impossible thing had happened as that they should have been surrounded by the sea, and Owen Ludlow should have forgotten them, and the dozens of kind hearts almost within hail in the village above been unconscious of their peril, depend upon it Sage would have fought desperately for her own life and for Kitty's. You know when people have had a sharp blow on the head, they are a little bit stupefied just at first; and it is the same when the heart is struck—the senses are dulled and blunted.

'Look ye here, Missy; shall I carry the little maid up the hill? She don't look fit-like to carry herself, and the clouds be coming up thick over you, and maybe we'll get some rain.'

It was Ben Caster who spoke, and he must have been close by while Sage was resigning herself and Kitty to a watery grave. And before they were half-way up the beach, Mr Ludlow overtook them, and relieved Sage of the burden of shawls and cushions with which she was laden, declaring that he would go back and fetch the rest after tea, as the tide would not be up there for a couple of hours.

On that former occasion, not yet a year ago, when trouble had befallen Sage at Scar, she was allowed the luxury of solitude and quiet in which to recover her bearings and face the future. She had no need then to speak of what she felt, still less to pretend to feel other than she did, and to swear that black was white, and cruel wrong right, and that she entirely agreed and was content with the new turn events had taken. Now she must collect her forces and arrange her line of defence with the smallest delay possible, for at any moment Ludlow, knowing whose letter he had dropped into her lap, might ask the natural question, 'Well, when is he coming?'

And then she would have to say that Maurice was not coming; that he would never come again; and, moreover, that it was quite right he should not come; and that she entirely agreed with all he said, and with the wisdom of ending the engagement between them. And then she would have to take up the cudgels for Maurice, even against herself, for she knew that Ludlow would be very angry, and would not pick his words in speaking of Maurice's behaviour; and she would not listen to that; and so, perhaps, she would lose her friend as well as her lover.

She might really have put off the dreaded explanation till the next day, for Kitty was tired

and exacting, and Ludlow went off after tea, and did not return till after Kitty was in bed, and when Sage might quite reasonably have gone to bed too, as Mrs Stock pressed her to do, being also struck by the girl's sad look.

'Twere just how my poor, dear husband looked before he had his first fit; and I says to him, "Job," says I, "whatever is the matter with you?" And he looked kinder skeered like, and asked for a drink of water—being a teetotaler, and that strick as he wouldn't touch a drop of brandy, not if it were ever so; but seeing as you ain't that way, leastways, not pledged to it, I'd recommend just a little drop, as I takes it myself nows and thens when I gets the spasms, though not one as approves of leetle drops took promiscuous.'

But Sage declined Mrs Stock's offer, and begged her not to sit up any longer. So Mrs Stock went creaking up to bed; and Sage was left just for a few minutes quite alone in the quiet studio, with the great white moon looking in at her, cruelly recalling that moonlight night when her poor, little love-story had begun.

She went out into the great moonlit stillness, on which the soft murmur of the sea below gently fell; and just for a moment she let her poor, little, forlorn self go, and cast herself down in the dewy grass under the old apple-tree, with her arms round the mossy trunk, and let the sobs that were stifling her have their way, and shake the small, prostrate figure in its passion of grief.

'Sage! Sage!' Ludlow's voice called to her from within. 'Why, I thought you would have gone to bed, child. I had to walk into Shingle to send a telegram.—Why, what have you been about? Your dress is quite wet. Have you been sitting on the damp grass? What an incorrigible little Cockney it is! never thinking of the dew.'

#### CHAPTER XXIII.

Yes, and he too! let him stand  
In thy thoughts, untouched by blame.  
Could he help it? if my hand  
He had claimed with a hasty claim?  
That was wrong perhaps—but then  
Such things be—and will again.  
Women cannot judge of men.

MRS BROWNING.

Before telling of the conversation between Sage and Owen Ludlow that night, and of poor, little Sage's gallant efforts to shield her lover from the just reprobation of his friend, I must tell of Ludlow's letter which had occasioned him the walk into Shingle that night. It was one that most artists would have hailed with delight, and with almost incredulous delight moreover, seeing that it was a fancy price that had been put on Mr Ludlow's picture, for it was a letter from his agent in London to say that the picture was sold at the price put upon it, and a cheque for the amount paid in to his banker's. 'I did not think it necessary to telegraph to you before accepting the offer, as, with all respect to your picture, the price put on it seemed such as to preclude any chance of a purchaser; and I believe it is only because the lady has some special fancy for it, some likeness in one of the figures I think it is, that she offered what some might consider an out-of-the-way price for it; and as these fine

ladies' caprices are not to be reckoned on to last long, I thought it better to close the bargain before she changed her mind about it. The purchaser is Lady Lester, of Beechfield and Park Lane. Her solicitor, Mr Freestone, came about it with the cheque ready drawn ; and as the picture has been at our place since the Academy closed, and was still in its packing-case, I told him it should be forwarded to her ladyship immediately.—Hoping that you will approve my prompt action, believe me, &c.'

Now, as Owen Ludlow had lost all pleasure or interest in the picture since that interview with Pomona, he had not the same feeling about selling it which had impelled him to put a fancy price on it ; and if it had been any one else in the world but Lady Lester, he would have been quite contented to let it go and hear no more of it ; but somehow, as coming from her, it seemed the price of the actual Pomona in flesh and blood, not the Pomona in paint on canvas. There had been no sense of barter or exchange twenty years ago, when he gave his little girl to Lady Lester, though, indeed, the price he gained then was comfort and freedom from galling responsibility ; but now, the cheque seemed like the completion of the bargain, and the idea of a man bartering his own flesh and blood for coin of the realm revolted him. And then, too, he guessed wonderfully near the mark at what Lady Lester meant, and how she had interpreted his meaning in that miserable picture. She had taken it as a threat that he might lay claim to this beautiful, proud, young beauty, and drag her away from her brilliant position ; and the price he casually put on the picture, just because he thought it was beyond the outside limit of possibility for any one to give, had been interpreted as the price of his silence.

Such, indeed, roughly speaking, had been Lady Lester's idea. Little by little, from one and another, she had found out about the strange likeness ; and Pomona had told her about her meeting with the painter, this Mr Ludlow, who did not take her fancy, though Sage liked him so much. Pomona had thought that Martin's warning not to talk about Mr Ludlow had been a nervous fancy of the anxious, old servant ; but certainly the subject did seem to excite Lady Lester most unaccountably, and she so often recurred to it and questioned and cross-questioned the girl about the interview, that Pomona grew quite unhappy, and privately consulted the doctor as to whether undue excitement about trifles were ever a symptom in cases like her mother's, and was reassured by him that, in cases of great bodily prostration, the mind and nerves could not be expected to keep their usual steadiness, and that the only thing was to avoid agitating subjects as much as possible.

Mr Freestone, who came down frequently to Beechfield, and to whom she gave instructions as to the purchase of the picture, was inclined to think that illness was affecting her mind, in this sudden whim for the possession of a picture that she hardly seemed likely to live to see, and which she apparently had no particular wish to see either, as she directed that it should be taken to Park Lane and remain there till further orders.

'Well, one comfort is she can afford it ; and

Miss Pomona will never miss it out of her big fortune ; and if she did, she would be the first to wish that half the estate should go, rather than Lady Lester should be thwarted in her smallest wish.'

It was with the greatest relief and satisfaction that Lady Lester received Mr Freestone's letter announcing the purchase of the picture, and enclosing the agent's receipt ; but two days later a telegram arrived which upset her terribly, and made Pomona declare that no telegrams in future should be taken to her. It was from Mr Freestone : 'Some difficulty about picture. Artist declines to sell, but hope to arrange the matter.'

To which Lady Lester telegraphed in answer : 'Double the price if necessary.' A message over which Mr Freestone sighed and pondered deeply, considering how far it was right to carry out the wishes of a person clearly out of her mind.

When Owen Ludlow came back from Shingle, having despatched his telegram to his agent, bidding him, if possible, stop the sale of the picture, his mind was much more composed ; and accordingly, he was much more observant, and Sage's dress, wet with the night-dew, and her wan little face, did not escape his notice, nor the nervous twisting and untwisting of her fingers, as she sat in the window with a bar of moonlight falling across her lap, where those tell-tale hands lay, while her face was carefully turned away from the glow of the red-shaded lamp on the table.

'The beggar's not coming,' Ludlow said to himself. 'Pon my word ! it's too bad, and I shall tell him so, first chance.'

It was a little mortifying to Sage to find that, after her great self-control and composure, he should have remarked that there was something amiss ; but still it made it easier to begin, and she said : 'I wanted to tell you that it is all over between me and Maurice—and,' going on quickly, in order to prevent what was likely to follow the sudden angry movement of Ludlow's arm and the laying down of his pipe—'and I think it is quite the best ; and I quite agree with him.'

'May I ask the reasons, if there are any ?'

'Yes ; but you must not ask like that. You must be very kind to your little friend, for, though it is quite right, it is a little bit hard.'

'Yes, dear, tell me.'

'I have really known it all along,' she said ; 'but he has only just found it out, that it is folly going on with this engagement of ours, when there is no prospect of any end to it. You see, he cannot get any situation that would enable him to marry, though several have turned up that would not have been so bad if he were not married.—Dishonourable ? Hush ! you must not dare to call him that, not to me.—You did not really mean it. It is my happiness he is considering all along, and he is quite right, for I should be miserable if he were not happy. If I had been like Pomona.—Oh ! Mr Ludlow, I have never envied her before, but I can't help feeling it now. All that beautiful place and everything—I don't care about it for myself ; but if I could have given it all to him—and I think I could have made him happy.' And here the poor, little voice, that had quavered and choked more than once, broke down utterly.

She was sobbing hysterically now ; and he got up and paced up and down the room, angry with Maurice, pitying her, bitterly blaming himself.

Presently, when she was calmer, she got up and came to where he stood, at the other window, moodily gazing out into the night. She had dried her eyes and even managed a little pitiful smile, that was more pathetic than her tears.

' You must not be angry with him,' she said ; ' it is quite right. It is just as much my doing as his. I think if he had not written to put an end to it, I should have done it. I am going to write to father to-morrow and tell him. I think he will be glad. I don't think he ever really liked Maurice. I've got father and Kitty and the boys still—and you,' she added shyly, holding out her hand. ' You will still be my friend.'

#### PIMENTO.

EVERY one must be familiar with the spice whose black grains, large as duck-shot, are known indifferently by the names of Pimento, Allspice, and Jamaica Pepper. This spice is the dried berry of a tree, the Pimento, found in the island of Jamaica, where it grows naturally to the height of some twenty or even thirty feet ; and it is from Jamaica that the whole of the allspice put annually on the markets of England and the Continent is exported. Though a native of Jamaica, the pimento is not found distributed throughout the island ; it refuses to grow upon the lower coast-lands, and only comes to its greatest development on the mountains that occupy the interior of the island and slope away to the sea. The northern parish known as St Ann is the chief district of the pimento cultivation, forty thousand of the ninety-five thousand acres there cultivated being returned as devoted to pimento. Another species of pimento, known specifically as *acris*, is also a native of Jamaica, and from the leaves of this tree the aromatic principle of the well-known bay-rum is extracted ; but its cultivation has for some reason or other been neglected by the colonists.

The cultivation of the pimento exhibits some remarkable differences from that of other spices. In the first place, it has not been found possible to rear healthy plants from the seeds, and were it not that nature came to the help of the grower in this respect, the output of spice must, as soon as the present trees became old and unproductive, diminish and at length cease. Whatever may be the reason—and it does not seem that any one has taken the trouble to seriously seek for it—it is a fact, as many experiments have demonstrated, that seeds planted in the ordinary way produce only weakly plants, which, when they have arrived at the age when one might expect them to produce fruit, are either barren or bear only a meagre crop of berries. No greater success attends the attempt to increase the stock by means of slips ; and so fully have these facts been proved, that no grower endeavours to rear his own plants, but leaves the work to the birds that throng the trees when the seeds are ripening.

One has only to see the numerous seedlings springing up throughout the pimento groves to acknowledge the wisdom of this course. In this

way, the original plantations, or 'walks,' as they are called, were established, and at the present time, when it is desired to stock land with pimento, the following plan is adopted. The ground, chiefly forest, having been chosen, a party of wood-cutters is employed to fell the huge trees, whose trunks are left lying where they fall as a protection to the young plants that will spring up by the beneficent action of nature. The smaller growth of bush and the limbs of the trees are gathered together and burnt, their ashes forming a manure. The land, thus cleaned, is planted with provisions, and being virgin soil, yields a bountiful return of yams, cocos, and plantains. After the lapse of some months, one may see springing from the soil in different places the young pimento plants with their fresh green heads of aromatic leaves. Care must now be taken to keep away the cattle from the young plantation, until, indeed, the trees have grown sufficiently to put their foliage beyond the reach of the cows' teeth, as the temptation the spicy leaves offer is one not to be resisted, and a bite is generally fatal to any further development of the plant. After two or three crops of provisions have been taken from the soil, further cultivation ceases, and the short grass which only awaits its opportunity soon grows thick and sweet over the place where once the forest giants flourished. In two or three years, the pimento plants have grown sufficiently to allow of the pasturing of the cattle in the walk, and for the future the pimento grower has only to keep the ever-springing bush cut away, and to gather in August what crops the seasons send him.

Owing to the haphazard way in which the trees have been planted, one must not expect regularity in their disposition in the walks, and, as a fact, they are seen gathered into clumps, or scattered singly about the narrow valleys or swelling hill-sides, and not arranged in rows, as in other forms of cultivation. Mingled with the pimento, however, are the oranges, the prolific Seville and the sweet variety, limes, lemons, and other fruit-trees ; not to mention those forest trees that have been saved to give shelter to the cattle ; and the general view of a walk from some neighbouring hill is wonderfully effective by reason of the diversity of foliage. Perhaps the best time to visit the plantations is when the pimento throws out its blooms ; then each tree is wreathed with masses of pale white flowers, whose fragrance spreads far and wide, and reminds one vividly of the poet's words :

Sabean odours from the spicy shore  
Of Araby the blest.

Around the sweet flowers hum thousands of small wood-bees ; and a million tiny insects crawl and creep among the petals, offering a rich feast to the humming-birds and other insect feeders. Too short, however, is the period of feasting ; for in a few days the tiny petals curl and wither, and fall in a white cloud to the earth as each breath of wind stirs the leaves. The walk loses its interest until the berries have swollen and are fit to be gathered.

In August, if the weather has been propitious, and if no storm or hurricane has swept the trees of either blossom or fruit, the pimento grower prepares to gather in his harvest. Early in the

week he gives notice to his headman that on the following Monday 'pimento-picking' will commence; and straightway word is sent to the surrounding villages. As a rule, each property has its own work-people, who live in the neighbourhood and work upon the plantation throughout the year; and it is to these that the grower looks for help in harvest-time. But if the property is large, or if the spice-berries are ripening quickly under a hot sun—for they must be gathered just before they turn black—it may be necessary to summon additional pickers. These are easily got; for the work is not heavy and the pay good. As they are paid by results—that is, on the amount picked—every man brings his wife and any children he may have able to pull the spice from the stem, and in this way the weekly earnings of a family may be considerable, considering the rate of wage of the country.

Early on Monday morning the gang of pickers will have gathered before the owner's house. Grouped together as they usually are, they form to a stranger rather a picturesque assembly—the men in shirt and trousers, with their formidable 'machetes' or cutlasses tucked under their arms, or stuck into the ground before them; and the women and girls in red and white turbans, with their garments looped up around the waist, so as to give greater freedom to the feet in walking. Each party is well supplied with large open bamboo baskets, the inevitable black iron pot for cooking, and calabashes or gourds for carrying water from the house into the walks. Large, coarse bags, in which to bring home the spice, are served out by the owner; and presently the whole company have scattered to their work. Their method of gathering the pimento is simple. One of each party of pickers, generally a lad—though the women and girls frequently perform this part of the work—climbs the trees, breaks off the heavily-laden branches, and drops them to the ground. If he is expeditious and skilful in his work, the 'breaker' will not take a long time to strip a tree of its spice, leaving it, from the loss of the branches, in rather a ragged condition. It is his business to keep the pickers constantly supplied; and as soon as he has 'broken' a tree, he descends, and carries the great bundle of branches to where they sit with their baskets before them. Immediately on receiving the spice, they proceed to take branch after branch in the left hand, while with the right they pull the round berries from their stems and let them fall into the baskets. In this way a practised picker will gather some seventy pounds of the green berries in the day, provided, however, the season be early and the pimento plentiful. On some properties, a different method of separating the spice from the branches is adopted, but this is only when a careful supervision over the workpeople is not exercised. A sheet is spread upon the ground, and the negro, grasping the branch in one hand, thrashes off the berries with a small stick, thus gathering a greater amount, as compared with the other method, but at the same time bruising the skin of the berry by his blows, and consequently reducing its market value.

As it is found that pruning the pimento is followed by serious consequences to the tree, in that the branch cut invariably dies back to the

main stem, which, however, does not occur when the branches are broken, the annual gathering of the spice not only relieves the tree of the burden of its fruit, but leaves it in a condition to put forth in a short time new shoots. As a confirmation of this statement, it may be mentioned that in the year following a poor crop, when the trees have not been extensively broken, the yield is far less than ordinarily, presumably because the trees have not been pruned in the process of gathering the pimento.

The scene in the walks when the picking is in full swing is both curious and interesting. As one rides through, the different parties of pickers may be seen, each sitting in a semicircle at the foot of some tree, busily occupied with their work. Not far off is a fire, over which is bubbling the iron pot containing the mid-day meal of vegetables; and at times one of the party leaves his work to attend to it. In the midst of a shaking pimento-tree, the 'breaker' is seen snapping off the branches of spice and throwing them to the ground, where they fall lightly by reason of the leaves attached to them. If the tree be young, and he dare not risk his limbs upon it, he has a long crooked stick, by which he can easily bring the bunches within reach of his arm. There is usually much chatter and laughter, for the negro is merry hearted; and if the spice be plentiful, he can reckon upon making a good day's wage. Towards evening, when already the sun has nearly dipped behind the forest hills, the negroes begin to return from the walks, the men bearing the heavy bags of spice upon their heads, the women the baskets, and the children the iron pot, the calabashes, or other belongings of the family. The scene of interest is now transferred to the barbecues—those great stone terraces on which the coffee and pimento are dried. Up the steep steps struggle the heavily laden men, and throw their burdens with a thud upon the barbecue. Now commences the work of measuring the quantity gathered by each negro. A flour-barrel has about one-third of its length sawn off and the ends removed, and this serves as the accepted measure. Being filled with the green and black berries, it is lifted up, leaving a heap of spice on the barbecue. This is a half-barrel, but the remainder of the barrel is also used as a measure, and is termed the quarter-barrel. When each picker has had his spice measured, a ticket is given to him indicating the amount he has earned; and on Thursday evening he exchanges this ticket for money.

For some days before the commencement of the picking, the barbecue-man—generally an old negro whose active days on the plantation are about over—has been busy making 'rakes' or brooms of the fan-palm, or in sweeping clean the terraces for the reception of the produce. And now that the first day's gathering is on the barbecues, he proceeds to spread out the pimento with his solid rakes until it covers the smooth surface to the depth of an inch. The whole area of the barbecues, frequently extensive, is divided by low ridges of stonework into terraces of varying extent, and connected with one another by openings in the stonework divisions. As fresh supplies of spice come in from the walks, the several divisions get quickly filled, since the gathering of one day is not mixed with that of

another until the whole crop has been cured. Under the burning sun of the tropics, the berries soon change colour; in one day they will have turned from a pale yellow-green to a light straw tint; and the barbecue-man is kept busy as the curing proceeds in turning them over with his rakes. He does this in the following manner: starting at one end of the long terrace, he pushes his rake before him down the length of the pimento spread out on it, so that there is formed a wide furrow, at the bottom of which the grains are thinly spread, while at each end of the rake as it moves a ridge is formed. As soon as he has completed one furrow, he repeats the process, commencing now from the end he has reached, and so continues until the whole surface is furrowed over. By frequent 'scoring,' as the process is termed, it is arranged that all the spice receives the full benefit of the sun's rays; and in six or seven days—or even earlier, if the sky has been cloudless—the colour of the pimento will have turned to a dull brown, its soft skin will have hardened to a leathery coat, and the stem dropped from the seed. By taking up a handful and shaking it at his ear, the grower can tell by the rattling of the kernels within the husk that the spice is cured, and he then puts it into bags to await the winnowing.

As the spice grows darker and darker and the end of the curing approaches, the anxieties of the grower and barbecue-man begin. Let but a shower of rain wet the nearly cured pimento and the value is at once depreciated, since it becomes mouldy; and no degree of attention afterwards will rectify the error. Hence, at the approach of rain—he can hear it falling far away in the forest, or see it rolling rapidly in a thin gray mist down the distant hills—the barbecue-man raises a shout, and at once the whole household is in movement. The grooms leave their horses, the cook her pots and pans; the other house-servants come fleeing out of doors; the owner and his family and the visitors run to lend their aid, carrying with them any brooms or brushes they may have caught up in their haste. Soon the barbecue seems to be alive, there is such a sweeping and raking of pimento, and bringing of palm-leaves and tarpaulins and boards—such a bustle and commotion to beat the weather. The rain is sweeping down the hills opposite; now it is in the valley beneath; two or three large drops are pattering down upon the heads of the workers. But the hard work is to be rewarded; the brown grains have been swept into a conical heap within the circular ridge in the centre of the barbecue, the tarpaulins are spread, then over these the palm fronds, and last the boards to keep all in place. Let the rain come; it can do no harm now. And it does come, racing across the broad terraces until they seem to smoke with the mist that rises from them: while the spouts of the gutters are shooting the water far out from the wall. For a good ten minutes the downpour lasts, and then passes on, and goes roaring across the far-stretching forest beyond. The sun breaks forth, and nature, refreshed by her bath, smiles once more; but the pimento so hardly saved is not uncovered that afternoon.

When the crop is cured, nothing remains to be done but to winnow and send it down to the

port. The winnowing or 'fanning' is done in a machine of American construction, in which the pimento passes through two or three sets of sieves, and is subjected meanwhile to a current of air directed upon it by a revolving fan. By this means the small unmarketable seeds, the stems and bits of plaster from the barbecues, are separated out; the clean spice is then packed in bags and sent away.

The price obtained at present for the produce is on the average about twopence-halfpenny per pound, and shows a great decrease upon that paid in years past. Unfortunately, there is every indication that a further fall is imminent, and in such a case it will no longer be profitable to gather the spice. All this seems to point to the fact that the taste of the public has changed with respect to spices, or at least that some other spice has taken the place in popular favour of the once favourite allspice. Still, about nine and a half million pounds are annually exported from the colony, the value of which is estimated at one hundred and three thousand pounds sterling. Pimento thus holds the fifth place of importance in the exports of the island, being exceeded in value only by sugar, rum, coffee, and fruit; but one must feel regret that an ancient source of revenue to the colonists—for pimento has been exported almost since the occupation of the island by the English—should be in danger of ceasing altogether.

## LESS THAN KIN.

### CHAPTER III.

'WHAT on earth does he mean?' cried Ena, as soon as the sounds of that stormy exit had died away. Until that moment, neither of the two whom Wakelin had left behind had spoken.

The vicar threw back his still handsome head, and answered with a sort of fiery dignity which would have satisfied the greatest sceptic of his guiltlessness. As to Ena, however, she needed no such assurance: 'He means that I stole, actually stole, that abominable money! I!'

'My dear father!' with incredulous surprise.

'Yes; it is an absurd charge!' So absurd, indeed, that now he could actually laugh at the remembrance of it, the excitement of the moment leaving no room for apprehension of any consequences which might ensue. 'I am not sure whether I may not even find myself compelled to prosecute the man for slander. I must take a lawyer's opinion upon that.—Who did you say, by the way, wanted me down-stairs?'

The girl displayed a card, which she had been all the time twisting between her fingers. But she looked grave. Perhaps a prevision of the dangers ahead had come to her more quickly than to the vicar, in his indignant exaltation of spirit.

'Only a Mr Daintry. "Marmaduke Daintry,"' she read aloud, absently. Then: 'But how wicked of Mr Wakelin to utter such words. Suppose Jane or any one had overheard them!'

'They'll have every chance in future, I imagine,' somewhat grimly, as the angry sparkle in his eyes slowly faded. 'But Mr Daintry! Why— Of course I'll go to him. Surely,

surely it can never be Jack come to life again after all these years.' In the curious agitation caused by this second shock, following so quickly upon the first, such an occurrence seemed almost incredible, and he never noticed the difference in the Christian names.

It was, however, a person altogether unlike the tall, genial lad whom he so well remembered as his boyish playmate, and equally unlike the gray-haired, stalwart individual into whom time might have transformed that familiar friend, who turned from examining a photograph of Ena as the vicar entered the drawing-room. And Mr Russell actually started as he beheld a rather stout, dapper, remarkably well-dressed man of about thirty coming quickly forward, with a look of the utmost ease and self-possession, to return his host's greeting.

'Of course you don't know me? How should you?' the guest exclaimed heartily. 'Never set eyes on me before. And yet I hear that you have a cousin of mine in your own house, treated as your daughter! Awfully good of you, really! Can I see her at once?'

His mingled calm assurance and eager presumption almost took Mr Russell's breath away. For many a long day he had scarcely even remembered the facts of Ena's birth, or thought of her in any different light from that in which she regarded herself—as his own eldest daughter. No marvel, then, that, instead of speaking, he simply stared. But Marmaduke was fully equal to that trifling embarrassment.

'Don't wonder you're surprised. Never was more so myself than yesterday, when Sir George's—my grandfather he was, you understand—will was read, and I found out that such a person as my cousin existed and flourished. Lawyers explained, and seemed quite up in the subject. But I'd never heard a syllable about her, not a syllable, I assure you! Frightfully bad form of the old boy to let her sponge on you all these years, whilst he kept me in the dark too, and then to leave her every stiver he could alienate from the estate, don't you know?'

Gradually dawn was breaking upon the clergyman's brain, almost stunned as it had been by two successive blows.

'Sir George Dainty is dead, then?' he managed to insert between the last sentence and that which he could see already hovering upon his companion's lips.

'A week ago; and quite time too. Oh, beg pardon,' with a laugh, both amused and heartless. 'Really, he was so specially ill-tempered!—'

'De mortuis'—began Mr Russell solemnly.

'Oh yes! Very wrong of me. But to return to Ena. I've come as quickly as trains would bring me, to see her, and fetch her home. My mother says that of course it's the only thing. Proper sphere, and all that, don't you know?'

Evidently delicacy was not the gentleman's strong point. But it was a lack upon which Mr Russell did not feel himself called again to comment. Instead, he asked a question, or tried to do so.

'Your father'—

'Died when I was a shaver. He was Sir George's eldest son, don't you know? and owing to this clearance, I'm the head of the family now,' drawing himself up to his full, though

not very imposing, height of five feet six. 'Ah no! Title isn't on my card,' observing Mr Russell's glance. 'Haven't had time to have fresh ones printed yet. So much to do, you see. And that reminds me—mustn't dawdle here all day. By the way, I ought to have a letter for you somewhere. The lawyers fancied you might want credentials or such sort of rot. Though, naturally, I said that was rubbish.'

The signature of the note which he finally produced and handed over to its owner happened to be known to the vicar as that of a most respectable firm of London solicitors; whilst its wording was plain enough to dispel any doubts as to the bearer's identity, as well as with regard to his news of Ena's fortune. Before Mr Russell had reached the close of the few curt, business-like lines, he understood how completely altered were the prospects of the girl who had been to him as a daughter; and in spite of an aching in his heart at the idea of what this change must mean for Mildred and himself, had made up his mind how to act.

'Are you aware that Ena is in utter ignorance of her parentage?' he said, addressing the Baronet, who, too restless to stand still, had during the short silence wandered off again in the direction of the piano, and was diligently examining the music scattered about its lid.

'Is she? Oh, well, that's soon put right. Let me try the effect of three sentences,' with another laugh. 'See here: "Ena, my dear," I should tell her, "I'm your cousin, Sir Marmaduke Dainty; and your name is the same as my own. You're a rich woman too, and must"— Eh, what?'

'I was trying to intimate,' with some sarcasm, 'that I cannot allow that method of proceeding. Though you appear unable to comprehend its possibility, it is a fact that the intelligence that she is not my child, and is without natural claim upon my wife's love, will come as a terrible grief to Ena. Therefore, I must choose my own time and mode for explaining matters both to her and to Mrs Russell.'

Only by dint of indomitable perseverance did the clergyman succeed in getting so far. Four times at least his audience had sought to interrupt; now he was to be kept in check no longer.

'Oh, but really, don't you know? I can't consent to this. Grief to hear that she's an heiress, and cousin to a Baronet? Bosh! my dear sir, bosh! Had too much to do with women to credit that!'

'Where has he been brought up?' was the unuttered thought in Charles Russell's mind. 'One expects some gentlemanly feeling and behaviour from a man of his standing. But this is a regular bear!' Aloud, however, he merely responded, with cold dignity sufficient to quell even Joseph Wakelin: 'I have told you my fixed decision.'

Sir Marmaduke shrugged his shoulders. He could scarcely object further to the wishes of the man who for twenty years had carried out a duty which of right should have been undertaken by his own neglectful family. Yet the resolute words angered him. 'Then am I not to see her at all?—gruffly.

'Not to-day. Should you be at liberty in a week's time to return, we shall be happy to

receive you. Possibly, if in the meantime Mrs Russell has heard from your mother, you may be able to persuade Ena to visit your home and make the acquaintance of your people. I do not wish to keep her from those to whom she stands in such near relationship. But'—

'Ah, just so! I understand,' throwing off the sullenness which had for a moment clouded his features. 'The mater wanted to write before, but I said where was the need for ceremony between relatives? This day week, then, for Ena. Afterwards, she and I, don't you know? may have a good deal to do with each other. Good-bye, good-bye.'

And absolutely before Mr Russell had quite grasped the meaning of that final hint and smiling nod, the man was in the hall, through the door, and out upon the pavement of the street. When, however, at length the laudable intentions of the Baronet did make themselves plain to the vicar, he smiled. 'Fortunately, we can trust Ena's taste,' he muttered, half aloud. 'But what will she and Mildred say to such a parting as this may involve?'

That was a problem very speedily to be tested, for, as he stood there pondering it, the door of the dining-room unclosed, and the sound of women's voices in earnest conversation reached his ears. In another second his wife and their adopted daughter entered together.

So entirely had the latter interview driven away for the moment all remembrance of that which had immediately preceded it, that he looked at the two grave, troubled countenances with wonder. Could they have overheard? Did they guess? But Mildred's exclamation immediately enlightened him.

'Oh, my dearest!' she cried, coming close up to him and throwing her two arms round him, as though to shield the man she loved from all trouble, 'how dared Wakelin say such an awful thing?'

It was one of her husband's characteristics that though he could be and often was spiritless and moody without any particular reason, real grief and anxiety had a tendency—at least in the first moments of trial—to brace him to meet the burden with courage. Often as it fell to Mildred's lot to support him under protracted worry or in imaginary woes, his was the stronger soul at such times as the present. And now he stooped smilingly to kiss the upturned face, passing one arm tenderly about her waist as he did so.

'My darling, don't worry yourself; it will all come right,' he answered. 'I am confident that the money will even yet turn up. If not, we must make it good.'

'But your reputation,' urged the wife. 'A clergyman is so at the mercy of people. One breath of scandal and he is ruined for ever!'

It was too true, and he recognised the fact. Yet he still smiled.

'Milly, this isn't worthy of you. My dearest, remember that I am innocent, and that, therefore, my reputation has a better Guardian than myself. As I said to Ena a little while ago, if necessary I should not hesitate to bring an action for slander against Wakelin, and that would, I am convinced, abundantly clear me.'

'Only it was so unlucky that you should have

paid Clarke! And then, too, you specially told Wakelin to let you have gold, not a cheque, for I happened to hear you speaking of it to him in the hall. Everything is against you!'

Charles Russell sighed. In the first excitement and anger with which he had met the charge, he had not estimated the force of these details, as now, for the first time, he was conscious of doing.

'Well, if necessary, we must confess the truth, love, and humble our pride to own that your single gold bracelet afforded the ways and means of pacifying Clarke! As to the cheque, now that I have closed my banking account cheques are most awkward matters to manipulate. Only last month I was vowing never to accept another for any large amount.'

'If only other people can be induced to see and understand as we do!'

He had seldom beheld his wife so overwhelmed. And all the time he was conscious of another trial for her lurking in the background, acquaintance with which could scarcely be postponed. Mr Russell's heart felt heavy as lead.

'We must trust that they will,' he answered, with a cheerfulness he certainly did not feel. 'But, my dear, there is something I have learned to-day which I must tell you. No, Ena, don't go. It concerns you almost more than it does ourselves.'

How the intelligence was finally broken perhaps none of the three ever exactly knew. To watch the look of pain deepening in Ena's eyes as he unfolded his tale, to feel the heaving of Mildred's bosom as he pressed her to his side, and still to be obliged to continue his story, made that hour one of the hardest in Charles Russell's not very easy life. But the words were uttered at last. Ena had been made to comprehend that though the love which had always surrounded her still remained, her claim upon it had vanished. She saw herself, rich indeed in the public esteem, but deprived by one stroke of father, mother, sister, and brother. And the whole of the little world in which hitherto the girl had lived and moved seemed suddenly to be split and rent to its foundations. With a sobbing cry, she sank down on her knees before Mildred, who was sitting on the couch, and buried her face in that familiar lap. A poor consolation seemed the promised fortune for all that she was losing! 'Oh, mother, mother,' she wailed, 'don't desert me like this!' Such an entreaty could meet with but one response. In another moment she was resting on the same breast where, long ago, she had wept out her woes, and Mildred's tears mingled themselves with her own.

'My sweet child, we shall never desert you. Your father left you to us, and we have always loved you. Do you think anything could separate us now?' she whispered reassuringly; whilst her husband took a short walk to the window, and then brushed his handkerchief two or three times across his face before applying it, with ostentation, to its more legitimate use.

'And just as Dick is on the way home, too. Oh, mother, what will Dick say?'

Mildred shook her head. 'Poor Dick! It will be a sad return for him altogether, I'm afraid. Troubles never come singly; but to-day has brought more than its share, I do think.'

"Though one can quite suppose that some people, with more sense than we've got, might regard Ena's legacy as a mitigating circumstance," spoke up Mr Russell from his station across the room. But notwithstanding the raillery, he did not turn his head, or for the moment expose his own countenance to inspection.

"Legacy! What's a legacy?" from the ungrateful recipient. "Who can suppose that money would make up for all that this has taken from me? Oh dad, you will care for me still?"

And so the scene went on, until gradually they had talked themselves into at least a partial realisation of the state of the case, and some slight resignation to its obligations.

"For that you ought to accept Mrs Dainty's invitation, and visit her, there's no doubt," the vicar declared.

"Mrs Dainty? Oh, the Baronet's mother. What a trial for her to miss being my lady," remarked Ena with a laugh, which, though but the ghost of her usual gay ripple, at least told of returning spirits. "And how do you like Sir Marmaduke, father? You did not mention that."

A difficult question to answer with combined truth and civility to the absent. Happily, however, whilst he hesitated, Mr Russell was spared the need for reply. With a fling the drawing-room door was thrown open, and Bijou danced in, dragging a tall, well-set-up young man by one hand, and sending her announcements ahead in her shrillest tones. "It's Dick," she screamed. "I was digging weeds up in my garden, and found him, and he's come home to stay. He says so!"

Even Ena's troubles and Joseph Wakelin's suspicions were forgotten in the delight of that meeting and greeting. And Dick's protest that he wasn't a weed himself, whatever Bijou might consider him, was smothered in his mother's embrace.

#### SOME EARLY LONDON CONCERTS.

THE modern lover of music has such plentiful fare provided for him well nigh every day of the year, that it is difficult to realise how comparatively recent is the great growth of concerts and musical entertainments of all kinds with which we are now so familiar. The pedigree of the London public Concert can be traced back to the later half of the seventeenth century. Before that period, private concerts were given from time to time by different members of the nobility; but the people generally had little opportunity of indulging a taste for high-class music, and had for the most part to be satisfied with entertainments given in public-houses by performers hired by the landlords. Sir John Hawkins tells us how in places like these "half-a-dozen of fiddlers would scrape Sellenger's (or St Leger's) Round, or "Old Simon the King," with divisions, till themselves and their audience were tired; after which as many players on the hautboy would in the most harsh and discordant tones grate forth "Green Sleeves," "Yellow Stockings," "Gillian of Croy-

don," or some such common dance tune; and the people thought it fair music."

Public concerts owe their direct encouragement to John Banister, who had won fame by his playing on the violin, and who succeeded the celebrated Baltzar as leader of Charles II.'s band of twenty-four violins. Pepys, in an entry in his Diary for February 1667, tells us the court gossip of the day—"how the king's viallin Bannister is mad that the king hath a Frenchman come to be chief of some part of the king's musique." It was rumoured that he was dismissed the royal service for saying that English violins were better than the French—a statement which was no doubt regarded as heretical, opposed as it was to the prevailing court view as to the superiority of France in all questions of taste, and especially with regard to music. Banister's concerts, at the close of the year 1672, were advertised in the "London Gazette" as follows: "These are to give notice that at Mr John Banister's house (now called the Musick School), over against the George Tavern in White Fryers, the present Monday will be musick performed by excellent masters, beginning precisely at four of the clock in the afternoon, and every afternoon for the future precisely at the same hour." Four years later on, we read again: "At the Academy in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields will begin the first part of the Parley of Instruments, composed by Mr John Banister." The admission was at this time as a rule one shilling; and these concerts seem to have been held pretty regularly down to within a short time of Banister's death, which took place in 1679.

Another person who did much to promote a taste for music was Thomas Britton, better known as the "Small-coal man," who gathered a circle of music-lovers around him at this period in his unpretentious home in Clerkenwell. Among his guests were Woolaston the painter and Hughes the poet, as well as Dr Pepusch and Handel, who at this time had still his fame to make. To these weekly concerts, held in a long narrow room over his shop, the poet tells us that Apollo

Led his train,  
And Music warbled in her sweetest strain—

the train including the beautiful Duchess of Queensberry.

More important than Britton's musical club was the founding in 1710 of the Academy of Ancient Music, for the practice of ancient vocal and instrumental music. This association was formed at the "Crown and Anchor Tavern" in the Strand, under the direction of Dr Pepusch, the gentlemen and boys of St Paul's and the Chapel Royal taking part in the performances. The Academy had the honour of performing Handel's "Esther," the members appearing dressed in character; and its success is said to have led Handel to consider the desirability of establishing oratorio performances at Covent Garden. Fashionable society was at this period divided into factions, which grew out

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of the rivalry of Handel and Bononcini, concerning which Byrom wrote the well-known lines :

Strange that such difference should be  
'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

The unfair ban, however, under which Handel was placed, was not shared in by the king and queen ; and a story is told of Lord Chesterfield leaving the empty theatre, in which an oratorio was being sung before the king, and giving as his reason that he did not desire to intrude on the privacy of his sovereign.

The oratorio—invented in the middle of the sixteenth century by St Philip Neri, as a counter-attraction to the theatre—was first made popular in this country by the author of the 'Messiah.' As organist to the Chapel of the Duke of Chandos at Canon's he was the first to introduce organ concerts, and did much to recall sacred music from the neglect into which it had fallen in England. St Paul's Churchyard was then a centre to which music-lovers gathered, and many of the neighbouring shops were famous for their musical instruments, temptingly exposed to the view of those who attended the services of the cathedral, held twice every day. The meeting of so many musicians in this vicinity led to the establishment of regular concerts at the 'Queen's Head Tavern,' under a certain Talbot Young. Later on, they were held at 'The Castle Tun,' and won a certain amount of fame under the style of 'Castle Concerts.' This tavern had once been kept by Shakespeare's friend and fellow-actor, the comedian, Richard Tarleton, and was situated near the famous 'Dolly's Chop-house,' in Paternoster Row. The old 'Tun' perished in the Great Fire, but was afterwards rebuilt, and in the new building the 'Castle Society of Music' gave their performances, assisted by some of the vocal talent of the operas.

Benefit concerts seem to have been given from time to time at the various theatres, one given by Signor Carbonelli, a celebrated violin-player, and pupil of Corelli, took place at Drury Lane in May 1722, its programme, which was divided into three 'acts,' including 'a New Concerto for Two Trumpets,' 'a Song by Mrs Barbier,' 'a New Concerto by Albinoni, just brought over ;' and a solo on the arch-lute by Signor Veber'—a selection which shows the prominence of Italy at this time in all things musical, Carbonelli having been brought to England by his patron, the first Duke of Rutland.

An amusing concert bill of the time of Queen Anne, which has been preserved, enables us to form a good idea of the kind of entertainment then provided for the general public. The programme consisted of music, several opera songs, 'pleasant Dialogues and Comical Dances.' These dances, which were all to be represented in 'Habits according to the Fashions of the Countries,' included sketches of 'an Irishwoman,' 'a Spaniard and his Lady,' 'a French Peasant and his Wife in wooden shoes,' as well as 'Two Hugonots.'

The songs began patriotically with the 'Genius of England,' the sombre character of 'O Land me in some Peaceful Gloom,' being followed by the brighter strains of 'Let all be Gay.' In those days of amorous swains and dainty shepherdesses, the song of 'Cynthia now is cruel grown' and 'Strephon the Bright' must have found a re-echoing response in the breasts of the Corydons and Strephons present. The Dialogues seem to have been quite in the spirit of the Christmas pantomime, including 'Since Times are so Bad'—apparently no novel theme, even in those days—and 'Oh ! my Poor Husband,' irresistibly appealing to all married folk. This performance, which resembles a variety entertainment rather than a concert, lasted from six in the evening until nine ; and the price of seats was 'an English shilling the pitt,' and an 'English sixpence the upper seats.'

Vauxhall was now coming into prominence with its al-fresco concerts, for which the celebrated Dr Arne, the author of 'Rule Britannia,' composed many of his best-known songs. Even in the days of Charles II. it seems to have been a place of popular entertainment, for Pepys tells us that he went 'by water to Fox Hall, and there walked in Spring Garden: But to hear the nightingale and other birds, and here fiddlers, and there a harp, and here a Jew's trumpet, and here laughing, and there fine people walking, is mighty diverting.'

Ranelagh, too, was opened for evening concerts in the summer of 1742, when Beard was the principal singer, and Festing led the band. It was here, about twenty years later, that an infant prodigy, no other than the eight-year-old Mozart, performed on the harpsichord and organ several pieces of his own composition for the benefit of a charity.

The Madrigal Society and 'the Noblemen and Gentlemen's Catch Club' date from this period—the Catch Club holding dinners at the 'Thatched House Tavern' every Tuesday from February to June, when 'canons, catches, and glees' were performed by the members, prominent among whom at one time was George IV. This club celebrated its centenary in 1861.

More important, however, in the history of English art is the establishment of the 'Concerts of Ancient Music,' an idea originally suggested by the Earl of Sandwich ; and it was out of this Society that the famous Handel Commemoration arose in 1784. Though it held its first season in rooms in Tottenham Street, it is with the Hanover Square Rooms that the history of the Society is most intimately connected, for it was here that Catalani made her first appearance, as well as Miss Stephens, who afterwards became Countess of Essex. Up to the close of the last century, however, the concerts were held in the rooms in Tottenham Street ; and for a few years in the concert room of the Opera House, before becoming permanently established in Hanover Square at the commencement of the present century. The Hanover Square Rooms were for some time carried on by Sir John Gallini—who had taught the children of George III. to dance—after a similar fashion to the rival establishment of Mrs Cornely's in Soho Square. Masquerades, 'festinos,' assemblies, and so forth, alternated

with more serious musical productions. The Rooms were first opened with a concert given by Charles Abel and John Christian Bach, who continued for several years to entertain the musical world here; while later on 'The Professional Concerts' were rivalled by those of Salomon the violinist, at which Haydn in the closing years of the last century conducted his twelve 'grand' symphonies. Here, too, John Braham was introduced to the public as a tenor singer.

Meanwhile, the ancient concerts were patronised by royalty, and George III. would constantly show his interest in them by writing out the programmes of the performances with his own hand. Often, accompanied by Queen Charlotte, he was present at the Hanover Square Rooms, and is said to have had a chamber added to the side, called the 'Queen's Tea Room,' to which he presented a large gilt looking-glass. A special feature of these concerts was the total exclusion of all modern music, the pieces selected for performance having to be at least twenty-five years old.

While lovers of high-class music were being thus well catered for, we can catch a glimpse of the sort of fare provided for the mass of the population from a work by George Alexander Stevens, published in 1761, called the 'Adventures of a Speculatist, or a Journey through London.' An entertainment seems to have been then common under the style of Comus' Court, which appears to have contained the germ of the future music-hall. 'We went,' he tells us, 'to Comus' Court, as they call it—one Jack Speed's White Horse, Fetter Lane. These meetings were on the same plan as Sadler's Wells, where people might sit and smoke and drink, and hear singing, and see all the posture-makers and tumblers, yet only pay so much for liquor, and have all these comical fancies into the bargain. One plays with a rolling-pin upon a salt-box, another grunts like a hog, and a third makes his teeth chatter like a monkey.'

Much pleasanter must it have been to have heard Tenducci sing at Ranelagh, or Joseph Vernon at Vauxhall.

To revert to the ancient concerts—in the closing years of the last century two famous singers lent a brightness to these performances: Mrs Billington, who appears as St Cecilia on the canvas of Sir Joshua Reynolds; and Madame Mara, whose great merits were first fully appreciated in the Handel Commemoration at Westminster Abbey. Meanwhile, the Academy of Ancient Music closed its career in 1792. There was no dearth of good music, however, for Harrison and Knyvett had just set on foot the Vocal Concerts; and a little later on Mrs Billington, Braham, and Signor Naldi delighted audiences at Willis's Rooms; while Madame Catalani competed for popular favour in Hanover Square. In 1813 was established that still flourishing Society, the Philharmonic, whose concerts became associated later on with the Rooms in Hanover Square. The last concert held in these time-honoured Rooms was given in the year 1874; and the Club of to-day must be haunted by the musical echoes of many a bygone performance. Thus the opening years of the present century found the system of concert-giving firmly established; and the appreciation

for this class of entertainment has been ever since growing, as the enthusiasm of a St James's Hall audience can testify as far as London is concerned.

### THE WINNING OF PADDON MANOR.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

On a bright morning of April 1813, I, Joseph Smerdon, mariner, stepped ashore on Dartmouth quay with as heavy a heart under my shag waistcoat as any man carried that day in Devonshire. You may judge if there were not reason for this, when I tell you that three weeks before I had been first-mate of an Indiaman called the 'Arcot,' having in her hold a venture of my own which must have brought five hundred pounds at least, and now this had vanished away.

Seven years had gone since I last saw England, much less my native place, which was Teignmouth. In that time I had voyaged the Indies up and down, in country ships for the most part, making here a little and there a little by trading on my own account. In 1811 I was master of a transport, when General Auchmuty went to Java, and happening to do some service there, when I returned to Calcutta the gentlemen of the company recommended me to the captain of the 'Arcot,' whose first-mate had died of the cholera-morbus. Of the voyage home there is no need to tell; but, alas! whether through fog, or misreckoning, or premature rejoicing, or all three, a March morning—luckily, a calm one—found us hard and fast on the rocks between Ushant and the Cape Finistère. This was in the days when we were at war with France, and the French *chasse-mareés* were not long in finding us out, and consigning us to dismal 'chokey' (as we say) in Brest. But at that time a great number of honest fellows from our west country were free of the French coast, and willing to be of service to people detained against their wills in France or England; and so it happened that the 'Polly' of Dartmouth left Roscoff with Joseph Smerdon in her hold, as well as fifty tubs of cogniac, and a grievous smell of stale sprats, to deceive inquisitive noses.

But if a man is no more than forty-two, and a sailor used to ups and downs, a dinner such as I had at a tavern near the Butter Walk, and a quart of ale with it, puts a different look on things. And after all, I might have been much worse off; for my sea-boots, so old and worn that the Frenchmen thought them not worth taking, had stowed in their linings over a hundred gold mohurs, worth each a guinea and a half. So that I was provided against want for many months, as I reflected with satisfaction, sitting in the parlour window and looking out on the river, and the craft straining at their anchors in a strong ebb-tide, the green hills winding away to Dittisham, and the old gray castle on guard at the mouth.

Now, that you may understand my story, I must tell you something of my belongings. I was born and bred in Teignmouth; and my father was a royal-navy man, boatswain of the 'Oxford' at the time of his death. My mother had a brother named Jonathan Westcott, a

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small shipbuilder at Teignmouth, who was good enough to allow me to make myself useful about the yard ; and in due time I was apprenticed to him, till, my indentures being out and having no money to set up with, I took to the sea, and found my trade of good service to me.

Now, my uncle was not, I believe, a bad sort of man, and gave me no more cuffs and rope-ends than is necessary to make a boy stick to his work. But he loved money as well as any banian trader, and, as is always the case, this grew stronger every year. He took a hand in smuggling ventures, like most people there, and owned two ketches, carrying clay and moorstone sometimes as far as London. But the year before I left him, his prosperity seemed to increase, and no one could tell how. He had always lent money ; but now he lent more, and he bought the 'Unity,' as nice a lugger as ever cleared her cost in two runs to Roscoff. Her skipper was one John Bickford, an Exmouth man, and whenever he was in port he would visit my uncle, and they would sit over their rummers till sometimes my uncle would have to be carried to bed.

That afternoon I bought shore-going clothes, of which I stood greatly in need, and then began to think of the best way to reach Teignmouth. A boat, of course, would have suited me best ; but I could find none going there, and had no mind to charter one. The road by Tor Bay and St Marychurch was a bad one, and I resolved to take passage next morning in a boat going to Totnes ; and so by the highway to Newton-Bushel and down Teign side—some fifteen miles in all. So I embarked early ; and we went swiftly up with the flood-tide, while I smoked a pipe and watched the river wind and turn among the hills, and the woods breaking into young green ; and the air of my native land was sweeter than ever after the stinks and fevers of the Indies for so many years. And when we came to the ancient town of Totnes, I landed at the bridge, and set my face for Newton, without other baggage than my gold and a good oak staff, such as we called a 'Plymouth cloak.'

I found Devonshire hills at first somewhat trying to my calves, after such long absence ; but I knew where a mile or more might be saved by a right of way through the Paddon estate, belonging to Squire Hilliard. I found the stepping-stones on the bank, got over, and having crossed one field, rested at a stile to smoke. Just as I had seated myself, I turned my head, and beheld Squire Hilliard himself, a stern and active man of fifty, a terror to poachers and vagrants, coming towards me like Giant Despair whom I used to read of, and two keepers with him. I stood up and raised my hat, and he seemed astonished.

'Fellow,' he said, 'what are you doing trespassing here ?'

'Your worship,' I answered, 'it is no trespass. This is a right of way, acknowledged this forty years, for the use of people going on their lawful occasions.'

'Ha !' he replied—'a sea-lawyer, it seems. And who may you be, and what is your lawful occasion, as you call it ?'

'I am a sailor,' I said, 'as your honour sees—Joseph Smerdon by name, lately escaped from

the French, and going to Teignmouth to visit my uncle, Westcott the shipbuilder.'

'Indeed,' he said. 'Then you had best be going, for it is a long way. Give my respects to your worthy uncle, if he be yours, and tell him to drink less rum and more water.' With these words he went on his way, and I on mine, wondering why he should care if my uncle drank or not. But this meeting recalled to me that Squire Hilliard and my uncle were indeed acquainted, and the strange manner of their becoming so.

Two-and-twenty years before, Squire Hilliard had acquired Paddon, not by purchase or inheritance, but by winning it on a wager from a gentleman named Rendell. Squire Rendell was the wealthier of the two, for he owned Paddon, and another place called Darleigh, near Ashburton ; while Squire Hilliard's land, Utcombe by name, was at Bovey-Tracey. Now, it chanced as they followed the hounds one day, Squire Rendell and his horse fell into a deep pool of Teign, and were got out with much trouble. At the hunting dinner that evening there was laughter at his expense, which so vexed him, that, having much wine aboard, he laid a wager with Squire Hilliard, of Paddon Manor against Utcombe, which was worth far less, that they should swim their horses out into Tor Bay, the one who should first turn back to lose.

So on a calm day they and some of their friends rode down to the Tor Abbey sands, and the two gentlemen entered the sea, both horses and riders barebacked. My uncle, as a responsible kind of man, was at hand in a sailing-boat, and Jack Bickford with him, as well as two or three gentlemen, who were to be the umpires. They swam on bravely till about a cable's length from the shore, when Squire Rendell's horse, which was leading, was taken with a cramp, the water being bitter cold, and went down bows foremost, so that his rider was very near to be drowned, for he could swim but little. They brought him ashore with all speed, and recovered him, while my uncle and Bickford went out and fished up the horse with creeper. No one expected that Squire Hilliard would hold his friend to the terms of the wager ; but he did so, being, as was known, heavily in debt to people in London. So Paddon was made over to him ; but all the gentry thereabouts looked coldly on him ; and he had, as we say, himself to himself, turning from a wild young fellow into a hard and disagreeable man.

I reached Teignmouth late in the afternoon, rather tired and footsore, by reason of new shoes. Little or nothing seemed changed there, in the little crooked streets smelling of tar and fish, any more than the hills around were changed, or the broad Teign, with the boys picking cockles on the mud flats, or the great red bluff of the Ness ; and my uncle's yard was there, with a fishing-smack hauled up for repair. I walked across to the little house with the green door and rapped on it. An old woman opened it, and I asked if Mr Westcott were within.

'Iss fai,' she answered, 'but mortal busy. Do'ee want vor to spake to 'n partic'lar.'

'Tell him his nephew is here,' I said.

I heard the word nephew, followed by some

growling. Then she came back, saying: 'Plaze to step in, zar; and I entered the little white-washed room, with a window like a porthole looking on the yard, which I knew so well.

My uncle sat at a deal table with pen and ink, and a raffle of papers before him. When I had last seen him, he was a hale man, under forty; but he was almost sixty now, white-haired, and leaner and more stooped than he should have been, though his eyes were yet keen and his face not much wrinkled.

'Tes you, Joe, come back,' he said, looking up. 'Well, you'm growed to a vine man. And how's zeas zarved 'ee zincce 'ee wur vule enough to take to it? Zame as it do zarve most volks?'

I told him of my late misadventure, and he began shaking his head sadly. 'Vive hundred pounds, Joe,' he said. 'Ay, that's a tarrable loss, if you'm spaken the truth. Haven't 'ee got nothin' left?'

'Something I have yet,' I replied. 'But how is it with you?'

'Bad's the best, Joe,' he said. 'Trade be arl gone skat. The yard do pay about wages, and no more. If 'twasn't vor vree trade and my zavins, I'd be to workhouse.—The "Unity"? Catched, Joe, long agone. Her's a revenue boat now; but Bickford's revenue too, chief-boatman to Exmouth. Her'll be here to-night.'

I did not set much store by this, knowing that he would have said the same if he had owned all the town; and I promised to come again later and tell him more. When I did so, I found John Bickford with him, a man of fifty, short and stout like a capstan, with a face hard and red as a lobster boiled, and a look of exceeding honesty.

I told them some foreign experiences, to their great admiration, and showed a sample of what I had with me, at which they, as old hands at concealments, were amused. But at the middle of the second tumbler I observed: 'I forgot, uncle, a message for you that I was charged with to-day.'

'A message,' said my uncle. 'Who vrom, Joe?'

'From Squire Hilliard,' I said; 'and his word was, that you were to drink less rum.'

I saw the two look at each other, and Bickford said: 'Ay, a careful man he be now, not like when we known' vust along.'

'And Squire Rendell, how is he?' I asked.

'Died two year agone,' said my uncle; 'and his son drowd up sojerin' and married. Zame as you maight do to the zeas, Joe, if you'm a mind. There's Mrs Pearce, to Newton-Bushel—Kate Harvey that was—keep'th the "Bull Inn." A good place it be, but beyond a woman to manage; and if zo be's you can't pass what youn got vor ten times zo much, 'twas vor nothin' you lived ten year with me and travelled the world vor twenty.'

It was clear that my uncle Westcott and his chum did not want to talk about the two Squires, for they turned it off in some such way whenever I would have inquired further. And this shows that a man may err as well in saying too little as too much, for I began to think that all was not right in that quarter. Then I retired to my lodgings; and Bickford, who seemed free of the house, to a room up-stairs.

In the morning I was up and about, and met some that knew me, and missed some I had known.

I did not forget to make further inquiries; and they told me that Squire Hilliard was no fonder of the neighbours than they of him, though reckoned an able magistrate. He was unmarried; and what company he had at Paddon was mostly people who had met him in London, where he sometimes went. But of the new Squire Rendell they could tell nothing. However, one thing I learned, that there was some sort of intelligence between my uncle and Squire Hilliard, who had been known to recommend him to people who wanted money.

My most pressing business just now being to change my Indian gold into guineas, I walked to Newton-Bushel, and the Plymouth coach took me to Exeter, where the money-changers were astonished at finding a seaman unwilling to be cheated. As I got down from the coach at Newton on my return, I perceived the 'Bull Inn,' of which my uncle had spoken. I walked into the bar and rapped on the counter. Nobody came; but at the back of the house I heard a woman's voice in anger, and a man's using very bad words. I took the liberty to go round and enter the stable yard, where I found Mrs Pearce very flustered, and a hostler fellow very drunk and foul-mouthed, while two or three more stood by and gaped. Without more ceremony I kicked him out into the road, where he lay howling. Then I turned to Mrs Pearce, who was beginning to cry, and led her politely into the parlour.

'A dirty, vithy, drunken baste,' she sobbed. 'Never was I carled such names avore, and in my own house. I'll hav'n to justice, zo I will.'

'Never mind, Kate,' I said. 'I did the like for you at Denbury Fair once.'

'Massy zave us! be it you, Joe?' she exclaimed. 'An' where have 'ee been this twenty year? I've got thicky bead necklace yet you bought me to Denbury.'

My former sweetheart was now a plump, dark-eyed woman of forty, with hardly a touch of gray in her curly black hair, though she said it was a wonder it was not white, with trouble and vexation. She had been a widow some two years, and well off, with no children; but, as she said, 'the trade were not vitty vor a lone woman.' In short, before I took my leave, promising to come again speedily, I saw that the 'Bull' and all it contained were mine for the asking without any question of money. Mrs Pearce would not hear of my walking back the six miles, but the spring-cart must be got ready. Whilst waiting for this, a lady and gentleman on horseback stopped directly opposite the window to speak with some one on the footpath.

'Squire Rendell an' his new-mar'd wife,' said Mrs Pearce. 'Baint'm a handsome pair, Joe! Miss Lavis o' Chudleigh, she were, an' reckoned the best-lookin' maid in the county.'

'Not half what you were at her age, Kate,' I said. But this was a piece of poetry on my part, for the lady was truly handsome, not above two-and-twenty, tall and slim-waisted, yet firm and strong of figure, in her close riding-dress; in feature rather Spanish than English, as many are in our parts. But when I looked at her husband, I was amazed, for I knew him well, though I had never suspected who he was.

I have said that when we took Java I was master of a brig carrying troops. Now, in that

affair the Batavia fever and arrack wrought so upon our men that almost one-third of the force was unfit for duty, and a call was made for volunteers. I took the best of my men; and at the attack on the Dutch lines we worked a gun, as the General said, excellently well; and were not behind at the storming or in the enemy's camp. But though there was good fighting that day, none did better than Captain Rendell of the king's troops. He was the first man to enter the great redoubt, and ran through a gunner before he could put the linstock to a piece laid directly on our men. His sword—made by Government from hogshead hoops—broke short, and a vile native, like a crushed wasp, ran a kris into his leg; but he caught up a rammer, brained one Dutchman therewith, and kept the rest at bay till a musket-shot brought him down. I was there as they carried him to the surgeons, and heard his name; but it is a common one in our parts, and I thought no more than that he had well upheld the honour of Devon.

All the way back in the spring-cart, which jolted so for all its springs that I would as lief have walked, I had much to think upon as to how I should shape my course. But reflecting on how I had lost the gains of years of danger in an hour, and Kate declaring that a sailor's wife was no more than another man's widow, in a month's time Captain Smerdon, as I had a right to call myself, after the command of the transport, was landlord of the 'Bull,' and had introduced discipline there, which was all that was wanted, Kate knowing, as we say, all the ropes.

My uncle was not present at our wedding, being laid up with rheumatism; but as soon as he was about again, he came over to Newton and stayed with us for the night. We gave him a most excellent dinner as well as supper, and he did more than justice to them. But he being used only to spare living, the consequence was that Kate woke me that night, declaring that she heard thieves in the house. I took a candle and a cutlass and went out, but found no one. Hearing, however, steps in my uncle's room, which was next ours, I went in, and perceived him standing in his nightgear fast asleep, but with his eyes wide open. I would have gone out again and made the door fast, lest he should fall down the stairs, but at that minute he spoke.

'Cut'n away, Jack,' he said; 'don't 'ee lave a shred of 'n.' Then, after some mumbling: 'Three veet under, it must be, Jack.'

I knew that when a man is like this he will often answer questions, so I imitated Bickford's voice, who I knew must be 'Jack.'

'Why not your veet, zur?' I said.

'What a vule 'ee must be, Jack,' he answered. 'Water be too thick to see in, an' three veet deep'll catch's knees zo nice as may be.'

I nearly let fall the candle, as it flashed into my head what he was talking of; but before I could think of what to ask next, he spoke again. 'Iss zure, Squire,' he said, 'but vor cash down. Her deserv'th it vor the like of such vulishness.'

At this minute, Kate, wondering what I was about, opened the door hastily and upset a chair with a tin rushlight stand upon it. My uncle woke up, and seeing me stand there, with a

drawn cutlass, shouted 'Thieves!' and 'Murder!' till the whole house was aroused. I was so angry, that I could scarce trust myself to speak to Kate, and the rest of the night did nothing but kick and toss about.

For I saw clearly that in a few minutes more I should have learnt the whole of a vile conspiracy, planned by Squire Hilliard, and carried out by my respectable uncle and the honest Bickford, to rob Squire Rendell's father of his lands. This much I guessed, that the horse had not failed by reason of cramp, as was supposed, but from entanglement in a net or something of the sort laid there by them; and that my uncle had received a sum of money for this, which accounted for his sudden prosperity. But of this I had not a scrap of evidence or a word of writing to show, though goodness only knew what it might be worth to me if I could be the means of restoring Squire Rendell to his estate of Paddon.

But luck stood my friend, and in a way I least expected. Our business had begun to improve greatly, so that old Hawke of the 'World,' where the coaches stopped, grew jealous, and threw out nasty hints to the excisemen that I, as a sailor and my uncle's nephew, knew where to get good liquor cheap. So at last one day, as they came prying about my cellars, one of them, an impudent fellow named Curtis, said to me: 'I've bad news for you, captain.'

'Have you so?' I said. 'Then out with it, Mr Gauger, and let's have it over.'

'Why, that precious pal of your uncle Westcott's,' he answered, 'Jack Bickford, the chief-bootman to Exmouth, has been bowled out at last. 'Pon my oath, I believe the fellow had good interest somewhere to keep his place, for he's been hand-in-glove with the smugglers all along. But they found out that it was through him the whole force went on a wildgoose chase to Beer Head while a cargo was run at Starcross; so he's safe in Exeter jail, waiting for 'sizes.'

'Serve him right,' I said, 'for being a traitor to His Majesty.—But it will make no difference to me, whatever you may please to think.'

But it made a good deal of difference, for I saw that this was the time for a bold stroke, now that Master Jack was laid by the heels and could not get away. So the next morning the coach set me down in Exeter; and a crown to the turnkeys admitted me to that part of the jail where the prisoners not yet tried were kept.

#### THE 'MERMAID' AT THE ZOO.

VISITORS to the London Zoological Gardens should pay their respects to the most interesting of the many recent acquisitions, which is a young Manatee. This animal arrived in London in company with its mother; but she, poor beast, being bulky and short of breath, succumbed very soon to the frequent changes of conveyance which she had to put up with in order to get her to the Regent's Park. Weighing about half a ton, and being without the least capability of progressing on dry land, it is no wonder that the transport of the animal was a matter of the greatest possible difficulty both to her and her

conductors. The young Manatee, however, is well worth a visit; it is one of the most interesting animals in existence, and is, furthermore, not to be seen every day. It is true that the Zoological Society have had three or four Manatees in the last twenty years, but there has not been one on view for at least three years.

The Manatee shares with the Dugong of the eastern seas the distinction of being the only living representative of a group of animals which were once more plentiful. We find skeletons of extinct Manatees; and within the last hundred years, perhaps even more recently, a third member of the order, the Rhytina, has faded into extinction. This latter animal was, in point of size at any rate, a much superior beast to the Manatee, for it appears to have measured thirty-five feet or so in length; but, like many giants, it was of a peaceful not to say stupid disposition; and it had, moreover, no teeth to help it in convincing others of its right to continued existence; therefore, it ceased to exist. Very possibly, both the Manatee and the Dugong will follow in its departing footsteps, for they, too, are defenceless creatures, though they certainly have teeth; but these teeth are blunt and broad—useful for chewing the cud, but not to be relied upon for offensive purposes.

The great disadvantage under which the Manatee labours is its defectiveness of brain; the organ is small, and its surface is smooth, instead of being thrown into those folds, or convolutions, as they are more technically termed, which argue intelligence. In the long run, too, brain is more effective than muscle, even among animals.

In spite, however, of its intellectual defects, the Manatee has adopted a mode of life which will probably result in a longer lease of life to the species than if it had proved itself incapable of this alteration. We find the two species frequenting the rivers which flow into the tropical parts of the Atlantic; they occur, that is to say, in Africa and in America and the West Indies. The fact that they inhabit both sides of the ocean leads to the inference that they were once purely marine beasts; this assumption is of course strengthened by the fact that we meet with their remains in marine strata, rocks that have once formed part of the bottom of an ocean. So many marine creatures can also live in fresh water—the salmon is the most obvious instance—that it is not in the least surprising that the Manatee should have determined to change its habits. Now, this course of action must have been a move in the right direction, from, at any rate, one point of view. While grazing peacefully at the bottom of the sea, the Manatee would be liable to be interrupted by sharks and other carnivorous creatures of the deep, with which it would be entirely unable to cope. Such foes would be less abundant in rivers.

Why the Manatee, or the Dugong, should have—as some people think it has—given rise to the Mermaid notion is hard to understand; it would need, we should think, many additional rations

of grog to induce a sailor to make a detailed comparison between the shapeless, black, and bulky Sirenian and a damsel terminating in a fish. As has been suggested, 'Merpig' would be a more suitable name, though the Manatee indeed has not got the 'in'ards of a Christian,' as the pig is always said to have; its interior is constructed more on the plan of that of a cow, and, like that animal, the Manatee has a complicated stomach suitable to a vegetable diet. Its chief internal feature, however, is its enormous lungs; no doubt, these are contrived a double debt to pay, like the swim-bladders of certain fish. It is quite possible, from the habits of the animal, that it uses its lungs not only for breathing purposes, but also, when inflated, to enable it to rise to the surface of the water.

The Sirenians, as the Manatee and the Dugong are technically named, are, roughly speaking, hooved animals, which have taken permanently to the water, just as the seals, and probably the whales, are carnivorous animals which have adopted a similar mode of life; and it is highly interesting to note that in both cases a certain amount of modification along precisely the same lines has taken place: in all these groups of animals, the hands—and the feet, if they are present—have become more like a fish's fin, while the whole body has assumed a form like that of a fish. In the whales and the Sirenians, the hind-limbs have almost completely vanished, leaving only the most inconspicuous traces of them selves. From this, one would argue that the whales and Sirenians have been much longer aquatic in their habits than the seals. The very first lesson that the student of zoology learns is not to judge by appearances; otherwise, the Manatee would be undoubtedly put down as a near relation of the seal, or perhaps even a fish.

#### CHRISTMAS-TIDE.

'A MERRY Christmas!' How the old words waken  
A thrill and throb for many a Christmas fed,  
For hopes fulfilled not, that the years have taken  
Into their keeping, like the tears ye shed.

'A merry Christmas!' Let the happy chorus  
Bring a new thrill, new freedom, new delight;  
Past pain makes present joy but sweeter for us,  
E'en as the dawn of morning after night.

'A merry Christmas!' Be ye thankful ever  
For friendship that is left warm, sure, and strong,  
For love that fills your hearts with high endeavour.  
Live life anew. Ye do the Past no wrong.

'A merry Christmas!' Life has halting-places,  
Where ye may pause in all the busy strife  
To comfort those whose sorrow-stricken faces  
Tell their own story in the book of life.

'A merry Christmas!' Raise on high the holly,  
With spirits leaping at the sound of mirth,  
Far nobler than all sorrow is your folly  
That sheds 'good-will' and gladness o'er the earth.

HARRIET KENDALL.

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